

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 17 and 20, and add new claims 30-32.

1-16. (Canceled).

17. (Currently Amended) A method of placing the distal end of an ultrasound catheter at a desired location inside a vessel, comprising:

providing a sheath having an elongate body that has a lumen and a preshaped angled distal end;

providing a guidewire;

extending the ultrasound catheter over the guidewire through the lumen of the sheath; and

extending the sheath through the lumen of a guide catheter.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further including:

advancing the sheath independently beyond the distal end of the ultrasound catheter.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further including:

retracting the sheath proximal from the distal end of the ultrasound catheter.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17, further including:

torquing the sheath to redirect the angled distal end of the sheath.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the elongate body comprises a main shaft member and a distal shaft member, further including:

forming the main shaft member in an outer polymeric material having a reinforcing layer embedded therein.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further including:

providing an inner wall of the lumen of the sheath with a lubricious polymeric material.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further including:
providing the distal shaft member with a smaller outer diameter than the main shaft member.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further including:
forming the distal shaft member in a polymeric material that is free of any reinforcements.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further including:
providing the material of the distal shaft member with the same hardness as the material of the main shaft member.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further including:
providing an outer surface of the elongate body with a lubricious coating.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further including:
angling the distal end of the elongate body by an angle of between 10 degrees and 90 degrees.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further including:
providing the distal shaft member to be more flexible than the main shaft member.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further including:
providing the elongate body with a plurality of members that are attached together.

30. (New) The method of claim 17, further including:
preshaping the angled distal end of the sheath at a angle greater than ten degrees.

31. (New) A method of placing the distal end of an ultrasound catheter at a desired location inside a vessel, comprising:

- providing a sheath having an elongate body that has a lumen and a preshaped angled distal end;

- providing a guidewire;

- extending the guidewire through the lumen of a guide catheter;

- extending the sheath over the guidewire and through the lumen of a guide catheter;

- removing the guidewire; and

- extending the ultrasound catheter through the sheath and through the lumen of the guide catheter.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, further including:

- preshaping the angled distal end of the sheath at a angle greater than ten degrees.